



Human Rights Commission Minutes

Date: Wednesday, January 18, 2023

Time: 8:00 PM

Location: Hybrid. HHS Conference Room 27 Maple Street, Arlington & Conducted by Remote Participation

Notice to the Public on meeting privacy To prevent abuse of video conferencing technology (i.e., Zoom Bombing), all participants, including members of the public, wishing to engage via the Zoom App must register for each meeting and will notice multi-step authentication protocols. Please allow additional time to join the meeting. Further, members of the public who wish to participate without providing their names may still do so by registering to receive the meeting info and using the dial-in telephone information provided.

Please read Governor Baker's Executive Order Suspending Certain Provision of Open Meeting Law for more information regarding virtual public hearings and meetings:

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/open-meeting-law-order-march-12-2020/download>

Present: Commissioners Beauchemin, Brown, Grossman, Carney, Bauer, Jones, Key, Pusey, Soneja, Rogers

Absent: Commissioners Horowitz and Jolin

Staff: Jillian Harvey, DEI Director, Teresa Marzilli, DEI Outreach Coordinator

Guests: Chief Juliann Flaherty, APD, Capt. Richard Flynn, APD, Rebecca Gruber, Naoka Carey, Elizabeth Dray, Lynnette Culverhouse, Sarah McKinnon

Minutes:

1. Remote Meeting Notice and Land Acknowledgement (5 min)
2. Review of December 2022 Meeting Minutes (2 min)
 - Welcome to new Commissioners: Laurie Key, Clinical SW, Worked in Arlington schools many years
 - Scott Jones, LT from Bedford Police Dept, has lived in Arlington since 1995, kids in Arlington schools
 - Corrections: section 8A 3(3) "concerned with loss" vs lose of relationships
 - A. d iii - need to add the word "be" (She will be at the meeting with the Chief)
 - G i - there is a t at the end of no (shouldn't be 'not')

- Community Members list- Laurie instead of Laura
 - Motion accept as amended- Kathy, Drake - all in favor
 - Abstain - Crystal and Christine
3. Incidents & Complaints- January
 - a. transphobic language used against an individual - Jan. 5, an altercation between tenants in a building that houses some Somerville Homeless Program individuals. Mental health component acknowledged when investigated- services offered. Christine reached out to the victim of hate speech. no reply yet
 - b. Signs- BLM, All Welcome Here, and Pride flag removed from the lawn on 1/16. Christine reached out and replaced the signs. Bow St.
 - c. Chief Flaherty confirmed no other incidents were reported. Convo with Co-chairs about investigating lawn sign thefts. Dependent on ring cams, people in the neighborhood witnessing. Will remind on social media to let the police know.
 4. DEI Update (Jillian Harvey 15 min)
 - a. MLK Day updates & AHRC volunteers
 - Held on Monday. Success. 35th annual- first in person in a while. Great turnout and positive feedback
 - Kristen joined remotely and thought it was impressive, even remote.
 - Available on YouTube channel
 - b. Lunar New Year
 - c. Town Racial Equity workshops wrapping up - focus on how everyone's work is DEI
 - d. Equity Audit wrapping up in Jan. Will offer an overview of the full process, methods used, findings, and space for dialogue.
 - e. Language Access Project and focus groups - if Commission knows anyone in the community with a primary language that's not English, please recommend.
 - f. For Feb, Town Council will come to AHRC for the first hour
 5. Commission Vacancies Update
 - Kevin Bryant will be appointed at Jan. 23 Select Board meeting and will once again be full commission
 6. Working Groups Update (20 min)
 - a. Schools & Education - Grossman: Met with teachers from Gibbs who are working on a program with advisories addressing antisemitism
 - b. Outreach/Events – Bauer
 - i. Multi-language cards and bookmarks distributed. Want to add Haitian-Créole. Discussed Lunar New Year event, asked to co-sponsor \$350 for performers, space/labor in Town Hall. Feb 2. Flier distributed. For Black History Month, the call to artists is out, \$1000. Triangle shaped ones. Some old banners up first week Feb, second week the new ones.
 - ii. Impacts of Hate in March.
 - iii. Lunar New Year celebration- Bauer- Move to cosponsor event, assist with funding up to \$350. Second Kathy. Approved - unanimous.'
 - iv. \$1000- We're providing \$500 - Bauer move to contribute \$500 and expend up to \$2800 to create banners. \$3300 total. Seconded Drake. Rajeev: Brand new banners? Yes. Locations? Adding to the Arlington Heights posts. Potential for bringing into the schools end of year. Drake- Who chooses artist? Arts Council Committee. Approved unanimously.
 - c. Communications - Drake Pusey - MLK Jr post, developed letter regarding funding and activity for the Foot of the Rocks.

- i. Crystal and Christine are doing a lot of posting on FB and IG
- ii. Newsletter - No new progress update. Have to talk to Wix (web host). Need to get an email address from which to send it. Google Suite is challenging due to the host being Wix. Brown- Purchases were made long ago when offering a bundle package of Google Suite through them. Since we didn't own our domain, we had issues activating it. Perhaps now we look into ordering our own Google Suite account. Look into contract end dates, etc. Determine pricing differences. Kathy- is concerned about the absence of a newsletter. Suggest a hard look at the budget and determine the importance of conserving resources vs the value of investment to relaunch the newsletter. Christine- we set aside \$1,145 for Gsuite. The contract might be up in April or May. Web comes up first, and the Gsuite is the following month. Jillian confirmed she paid for the combined Premium Plan. Payment May 14 \$1,008 (tax exempt) and the other invoice April 1 - \$132 (combo) Drake and Melanie will work to coordinate canceling and implementing a new and interim solution
- iii. Social media policies
- d. Housing - No update

7. Police presence Police

- a. Rajeev. A number of discussions have taken place. Updates: Making the policy a joint understanding. Doc should not only include or mention APD but also any town, commission, or body. No intent to exclude anyone. Just want to be responsive to all emails received about police attendance.
- b. Melanie looked over Town Counsel's response. Stated in the document that we don't exclude anyone. The intention was to make space in recurring agendas for those who feel uncomfortable participating in meetings with an active police presence. Working on revamping how the AHRC currently operates to support inclusivity, participation, and mission. Is expanding to include all town bodies relevant to this task and its intent?
- c. Naoka- Communicated to APD concerns that the public provided
- d. Kathy- Confusing material in the letter. There is a legal concern. The opposite of inviting is to exclude. Should the statement distinguish between on the agenda and in the room? A challenge to a police-free zone?
- e. Jillian- tone of this policy. Liaisons should be prescribed similar actions.
- f. Melanie- reiterate that some of the most underprivileged have no access to us without a police presence. Accessibility. How are we serving the people we are tasked to support?
- g. Not mentioning the APD directly. "Incidents and Complaints"
- h. Naoka is no longer Commissioner but has agreed to continue on the working group
- i. Christine- Recommend the committee draft an MOU. Accommodations would be requested.
- j. Laurie- Capacity of police involvement vs. a member of the public (speaking for 3 minutes)
- k. Scott- This presupposes that the commission and police are adversaries. APD has an investment in what's happening.
- l. Sharon- We were trying to communicate that there is a partnership and collaborative relationship. These are business meetings. I'd like people to feel they can contact us.
- m. Beyond the MOU, we should include specific ways to contact us.
- n. Chief Flaherty- Appreciates the POV and feels fortunate about the partnership.

o. Anyone who wants to be part of the working group, email Christine/Rajeev to set up times.

9. Civilian Review Board criteria - Christine- We can nominate one individual. Could be a member of our Commission. The criteria have been sent. We should put out a call for community members. We have 90 days to nominate.
-Sharon- we should add one piece of criteria reflective of our own values and mission.
-Melanie- We should make sure a member of an underrepresented group is appointed

- a. Incident Coverage - There is a document out there to add names for availability
- b. Meeting/Events calendar - Voted on proposed dates. July moved to 18th. April moved to the 12th. An updated version will be sent out.
- c. New co-chair selection: Anyone interested in becoming co-chair for a few months, then add a new co-chair a few months afterward.
- d. Annual Report- Christine sent out. Will be presented at Town Meeting. It might be trimmed.
- e. MAHRC meeting last week

- a. Elizabeth Dray/ Jason Street- Knew Fasil when he was at the school where she worked. Agree with the need to make statements and also encourages a statement about Donovan Johnson.
- b. Sarah McKinnon - Expresses support for Rajeev's comments. Each point is very important. Support the Commissioner who pointed out that any police officer in attendance as a police officer is a representative that is a larger body, the police, which is historically not easy for certain individuals to live under. Encouraged to hear Chief Flaherty steps out whenever the issue arrives but put the weight of trust onto a person who already is saying, "I don't have that trust."
- c. Lynette Culverhouse- I would like to see Chief Flaherty's statements go further- the marginalized people are not here, and their voices are not heard. Would like to see Commission figure out how to reach out to those people and invite them

in. Are we centering the voices of power in town and not centering on those not heard because they're not being heard?

12. Announcements (2 min)

- a. Next meetings – February 15 and March 15
- b. Incident Handling
 - i. January-Christine Carney
 - ii. February- Scott Jones
 - iii. March-Sharon Grossman

13. Adjournment 10 pm

Next meeting: Wednesday, February 15, 2023, 8:00 pm

Anyone needing accessibility information or assistance to attend this meeting should contact dei@town.arlington.ma.us. This meeting is open to all interested individuals.,